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Weekly Review

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CHILE: EXTREMISTS LOSE LEADER

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Government security forces inflicted a severe defeat on the extremist Movement of the Revolutionary Left last week. Miguel Enriquez, leader of the movement and number one on the government's most-wanted list, was killed in Santiago on October 5 during a gun battle between security forces and the group—which had apparently been responsible for a daring bank robbery several days earlier. Nearly half of the hold-up loot was recovered from the house in which Enriquez died, along with a cache of weapons that included Soviet-made rifles and rocket launchers.

It is uncertain whether the bank robbery was a first step in a new extremist offensive, a propaganda ploy aimed at demonstrating that the movement was still viable, or an act of desperation on the part of a group constantly hounded by security forces.

[redacted] the movement had despaired of its ability to undertake serious terrorist activity, and that Enriquez himself feared that even if it could, such action would be counterproductive. Enriquez was even [redacted] to have authorized the group's leaders to leave Chile in order to escape a tightening police dragnet.

Last month, however, the movement rejected government overtures for a secret "truce" that would have called for the group to turn in its arms and expose its penetrations of the armed forces in return for safe conducts out of the country. The group may have felt compelled to revalidate its revolutionary credentials with tangible action. [redacted] the movement was considering abandoning its defensive strategy in order to launch an anti-government terrorist campaign.

In any case, Enriquez' death has deprived the group of its most capable leader. Leadership may now devolve on his brother Edgardo, currently in exile in Paris, or on Andres Pascal Allende, the late president Allende's nephew, who reportedly took part in the bank robbery but escaped during the shootout.

Strenuous government efforts to destroy the movement have hurt the organization badly. The group seems to have a magnetic attraction for young, violence-prone leftists, however, which is likely to help it survive and remain capable of at least limited anti-government activity. [redacted]

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